

Poor Postal Services in the Country

196. SHRI RAMACHANDRA KHUNTIA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

whether Government are aware of the fact that one postcard or inland letter of an ordinary man takes months together to reach the destination;

whether there is any time limit for reaching the letters at its destination; and

whether it is a fact that the number of postcard, the letter envelope have been drastically come down for the reasons for poor postal services?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) The mails are generally delivered in time. However, there may be occasional instances of delay to mails due to various reasons which are beyond the control of the Department like cancellation/late running of mail carrying planes, trains and buses, natural calamities, etc. The Department regularly and systematically monitors the delivery of mail in the country at the field and headquarter level to ensure prompt and efficient delivery of mails. As per the All India Mail Survey conducted in 1999, the delivery efficiency of rural mail was 77.7% and that of urban mails 82.1%.

(b) There are certain board norms/time limit prescribed by the Department for delivery of different categories of letters. These norms are subject to the mail carrying planes, trains, buses and other public transport maintaining their schedule.

(c) No, sir. The number of post cards, inland letters, envelopes and competition post cards handled during the last three years are given below:—

	<i>(in Millions)</i>		
	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99
No. of post cards/Acknowledgement Cards handled.	3479.37	3290.17	3433.15
No. of Inland letters handled	3313.24	3424.88	3525.56
No. of envelopes handled	5498.75	6039.69	5673.26
Competition Post Cards.	—	47.63	110.74

It may be seen from the above that compared to the figures of 1996-97, the number of articles handled in each category has been showing increase except

for marginal decrease in the number of post cards handled during 1997-98. In the case of envelopes, it may be seen that there was a sudden spurb in the traffic during 1997-98. There is sharp increase in the use of competition post card during 1998-99 as compared to that of 1997-98.

Telephone connections to rural post offices in Assam

197. SHRI PRAKANTA WARISA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

whether telephone connections have been provided to all the rural post offices in the state of Assam;

if so, the number of Post Offices yet to be provided with this facility; and

by when this facility is likely to be provided to such post offices?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) No, Sir.

(b) 336 rural Post Offices in the State of Assam do not have telephone facility,

(c) Telephone connections to the Post Offices not having the same are provided by Telecom authorities subject to the availability of resources.

Electronic exchanges in the district of North Cachar hills of Assam

198. SHRI PRAKANTA WARISA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

whether the target for installation of electronic exchanges in the district of North Cachar hills of Assam State has been achieved;

if not, the places where the electronic exchanges are to be unstalled in the aforesaid district during the Ninth Plan; and

the steps being taken or proposed to be taken by Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) and (b) The targets for installation of electronic exchanges are fixed on year to year basis. The target for the 1999-2000 has since been achieved. It is proposed to install electronic exchange at Jattinga in the aforesaid district during 2000-2001.